Literacy Professional Learning Group Review 2012

SURVEY MONKEY FEEDBACK COMPARISON

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| **SUMMARY 2011 (MAY)** | **SUMMARY 2012 (NOV)** |
| Number of respondents: 73  Full supported: 16% (12)  Adequately supported: 50% (36)  Inadequately supported: 38% (27) | Number of respondents: 31 (*Time of year?*)  Full supported: 33% (10)  Adequately supported: 86% (20)  Inadequately supported: 6% (2 – Social Science) |
| Where is literacy support gained?  40% (20) support from their HOD  60% (31) support from colleagues  6% (3) RTLB  35% (17) literacy PD in their subject area (in school)  16% (8) literacy PD (out of school) | Where is literacy support gained?  30% (8) support from their HOD  45% (12) support from colleagues  3% (1) RTLB  41% (11) literacy PD in their subject area (in school)  3% (1) literacy PD (out of school)  19% (5) from members of the LPLG  59% (16) from Literacy Coordinator |
| It is clear that teachers lack confidence in teaching very basic reading and writing skills (understandably)  PA, phonetics, syntax, decoding, handwriting, text structures and assessment question interpretation. | It is clear that teachers across all subjects still lack confidence in teaching very basic reading and writing skills. Much more, on-going, professional development is needed to support teachers! There is no quick or easy fix! |
| PD-type order of preference:  1. Department-based  2. Small group with literacy expert  3. Regular bitesized tips via email/P-drive  Least popular: Whole-staff PD, Ultranet & Online tutorials | PD received  1. Department-based: 90% (19 – Science, English, Learning Support)  2. Small group with Literacy Coordinator: 32% (8)  3. Regular bitesized tips via email: 97% (30) (Someone doesn’t check their emails!) |

# Literacy PLG work in 2012

This year the Literacy PLG was focussed on developing knowledge within the group to benefit the departments to which members belonged. Members represented the following departments: English (4), Deaf Education Centre (1), Learning Support (1), Dance (1), Science (3), ESOL (1).

Over the year, PD sessions were provided by the Literacy Coordinator on the following topics: School Journals – TKI resources, Journal Surf & the journal room; Lexia Reading – Strategies for Older Students; Reading Comprehension Strategies Instruction.

Other sessions included: deciding on the list of literacy tips to be covered via email; creation of Literacy Placemats – to be trialled in 2013; problems faced by students when reading exam questions, and the creation of resources for HoDs to share with departments; sharing literacy resources at the Deaf Education Centre (December session).

PD provided to the school by Literacy Coordinator

* English department (Remediating Poor Readers, Reading Comprehension Strategies Instruction, Analysing Test Responses, AVAILLL)
* Teachers of support classes (Simple View of Reading – understanding reading disabilities)
* Science department (Essentials for teaching poor readers; School Journals)
* Whole-staff (PATs, stanines)
* LUS teachers (implementation of LUS)
* Learning support teachers (Lexia)
* Emailed literacy tips
* Creation and maintenance of Literacy@Freyberg wiki (*viewed internationally*!)

Summary

It is clear that Freyberg High School staff need on-going, intensive support to improve student literacy. The PD provided this year by the Literacy Professional Learning Group and the Literacy Coordinator has been well received and appreciated, but it has been but a drop in the pond!

This year the group consisted mainly of teachers wanting to up-skill in the area of literacy instruction for their own personal- professional use or to pass on to members of their own departments. It seems that this was somewhat effective, but is not perhaps the most efficient use of this PD time. It would perhaps be better next year for the group to consist of teachers who have an area of strength in literacy who work together during this time to design, prepare and implement regular literacy tutorials for staff covering the areas identified by staff in this year’s SurveyMonkey survey.

An email has already been sent to staff seeking interested parties who would be willing to provide PD to other staff next year. This staff should be invited to join the Literacy PLG.

There are so many levels of need for Literacy support within the school that the LPLG cannot be responsible for it all. Teachers want general literacy assistance to help them make personal improvements, and it is here that the literacy tips have been most welcome and can remain an on-going support provided by members of the LPLG on a roster system. There have been a number of requests for assistance in report writing and this should be one focus for the LPLG next year.

At a subject level, teachers crave knowledge beyond that which is held by staff at Freyberg High School. It is important that Senior Management does not constrain teacher professional development within the literacy area to the limited expertise within the school. Experts from outside the school should be utilised: with Massey on our doorstep, we have access to some of the country’s leading literacy experts. There needs to be a budget provided to this group for the purpose of arranging PD from external sources, or a clear way of accessing a designated amount of the school PD budget.

At a class level, teachers of the literacy support classes (at each year level) should meet on a regular basis (like the TAGT group) to discuss the literacy issues encountered and to identify the assistance needed. The RTLB service should be used much more to serve this need for teacher-support, to ensure teachers of these students, across all subject areas, are aware of and practicing effective methods of literacy support.

At an individual student level, students at stanine 1 should be referred to Learning Support to begin the process of requesting assistance from external agencies like SLS. Individual students at stanines 2 and 3 should be carefully tracked and if progress is not being made, then external expert assistance should be sought.

There needs to be a Literacy Coordinator – or perhaps a duet – in 2013 to coordinate all this PD and to fulfil all the other duties covered by this role.

Student Data 2012 (Mainstream classes)

Our Year 9 intake for 2012 [FEB]: 47% below-average readers in mainstream classes (so not taking into account students in Homeroom, HPT, ILC or Craig Centre); 22% stanine[[1]](#endnote-1) 3 or below = 48 students in need of intensive literacy support.

Our Year 10, 2012 [FEB]:47% below-average readers in mainstream classes (so not taking into account students in Homeroom, HPT, ILC or Craig Centre); 28% stanine 3 or below = 74 students in need of intensive literacy support.

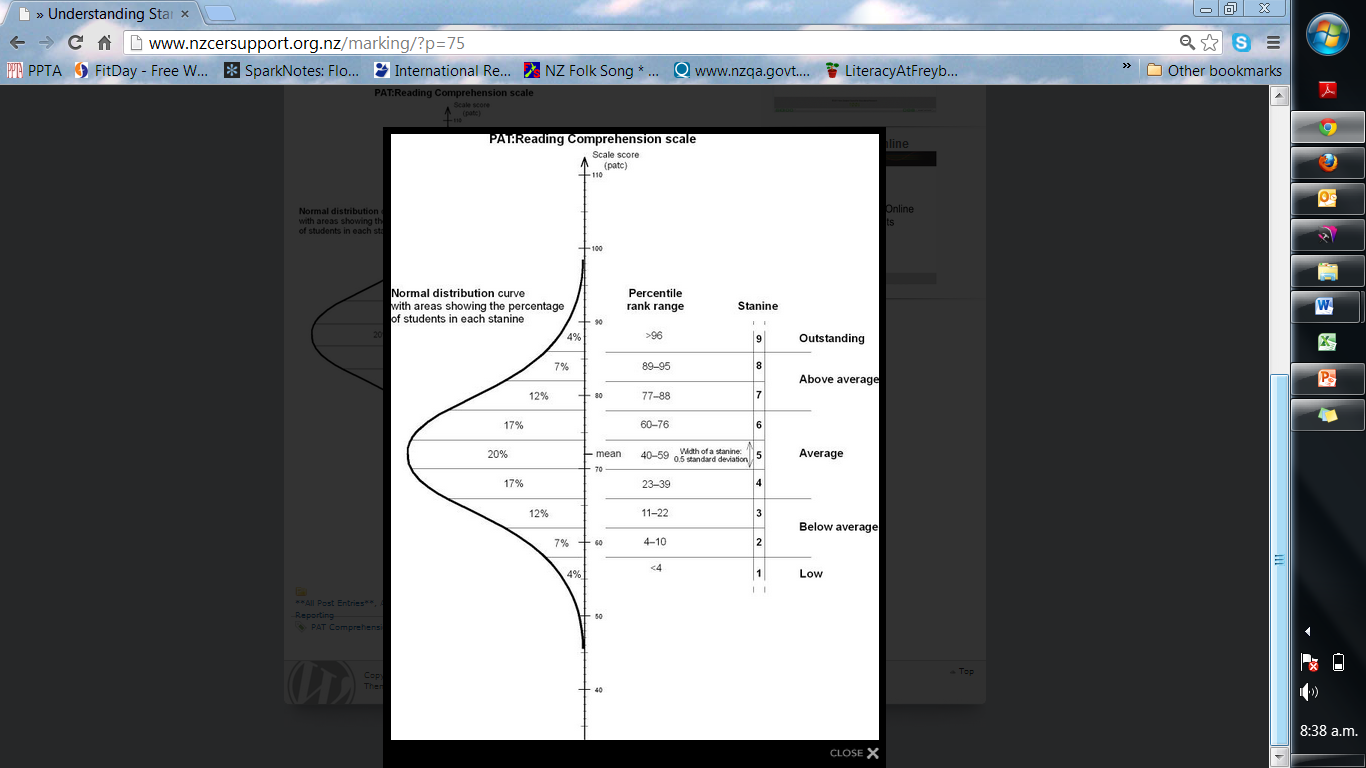
Our Year 11: two classes of 11EA students. Literacy Unit Standards Pathway was provided to offer these students the opportunity to focus on acquiring literacy skills rather than being faced with repeated failures.

Student Data (Mainstream classes) – Literacy needs in 2013

Year 8 intake (Year 9 for 2013): 45% below-average readers in mainstream classes (so not taking into account students in Homeroom, HPT, ILC or Craig Centre); 25% stanine 3 or below = 56 students in need of intensive literacy support. This shows that there are more students in this lower bracket than this year; more than two classes.

Our Year 10s for 2013: 30% below-average readers in mainstream classes (so not taking into account students in Homeroom, HPT, ILC or Craig Centre); 13% stanine 3 or below = 28 students in need of intensive literacy support.

The decision to reduce the number of literacy support classes to just one at each junior year group is, in my professional opinion, unwise. Students who are at stanines 1-2 are unlikely to be able to achieve Level 1 Literacy in Year 11 – through either the Literacy Unit Standard or Achievement Standards pathways – without intensive literacy support in the junior school.



Literacy PD Foci for 2013 as identified by SM respondents

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| **SUBJECT** | **Identified areas for improvement** | **PD requested for next year** | **School Journal usage** |
| ENGLISH DEPARTMENT (9) | * phonological awareness, phonetics, decoding, semantics, handwriting, assessment question interpretation, syntax | * small group PD to gain specific advice on helping individual students * help with LUS and publicising them across departments | 4/9 |
| SCIENCE DEPARTMENT (5) | * phonological awareness, phonetics, decoding, spelling, semantics, handwriting, assessment q interpretation, syntax, paragraph structures, text structures, contextual knowledge | * Improve staff reporting * Advice on which areas of literacy are important | 1/5 |
| MATHEMATICS (3) | * Background knowledge | * Continue regular email tips | 0/3 |
| SPECIAL EDUCATION (3) | * Handwriting, background knowledge, text structures, assessment question interpretation, assessment terminology |  | 1/3 |
| SOCIAL SCIENCES (6) | * Text structures, phonological awareness, syntax | * Identify a greater range of subject specific resources online | 0/6 |
| COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY (2) | * Syntax | Advice on report writing | 0 |
| FOOD & NUTRITION (1) | NIL | “when I need it I’ll ask” | 0 |
| TECHNOLOGY, ART (1) | * Spelling, vocabulary, assessment terminology |  | 0 |
| DRAMA | NIL | NIL | 0 |

1. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)